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FAMILY ENTREPRENEURSHIP – SELECTED ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL ASPECTS

Family businesses are the most key actors that make up the global economy. They are by far the most popular form of doing business in the majority of developed economies. At the same time, they are the epitome of the spirit of the free market economy as reflected in the role of individual entrepreneurship and innovation. The importance of family businesses for the development of economies has attracted increasing interest over the last few decades. There is a fast-growing body of literature about different forms of family business and variations in family entrepreneurship. Some of these studies focus on the family itself. The paper aims to show mutual interdependences between the family, the entrepreneurial attitude and the functioning of family businesses, which are to a large extent responsible for the economic capacity of the EU countries and regions. The paper is a theoretical and empirical one. It deals with issues related to changes that occur within the family as well as its significance in the modern world, including economic life, and the specific attributes of family businesses. The empirical part presents the results of the survey FLASH EUROBAROMETER 354 on “Entrepreneurship”. The paper is concluded by statement family businesses are the engine of deliberate and stable development passed on from a generation to a generation. Trust and loyalty, translating into relationships with employees and customers, are their important attributes.

Keywords: family entrepreneurship, characteristics features of family firms, family firm definition, entrepreneurship in the European Union

1. INTRODUCTION

Throughout the world the social roots of the ongoing economic development lie in *familism* and unique family loyalty. The family, or *entrepreneurial familism*, is a real engine of economic growth and job market development. This means that the family as the founder of an economic entity has no evident characteristics that would conflict with the requirements of the modern economy. The importance of family businesses for the development

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of economies has attracted increasing interest over the last few decades. There is a fast-growing body of literature about different forms of family business and variations in family entrepreneurship. Some of these studies focus on the family itself. The impact of different types of family structures and cultural traditions on the growth and development of family businesses appears to be a dominant issue.

The paper aims to show mutual interdependences between the family, the entrepreneurial attitude and the functioning of family businesses, which are to a large extent responsible for the economic capacity of the EU countries and regions. A growing interest on the part of the EU institutions, including the European Commission, in providing support for entrepreneurship and self-employment has been an inspiration for the authors of the paper to focus on this subject. There is a need to explore the issues related to the establishment and development of family businesses. This is evidenced by the numerous scientific publications, reports and pan-European projects in which the family business is the main theme.

The European Commission has incorporated the promotion of entrepreneurship into its Europe 2020 strategy⁴, which recognises entrepreneurship and self-employment as one of the key enablers of smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. Moreover, the Juncker Commission's top priority is “to get Europe growing again and increase the number of jobs without creating new debt”⁵. The Commission's Jobs, Growth and Investment package will focus on cutting regulation, making smarter use of existing financial resources and making flexible use of public funds. The development of entrepreneurship has important benefits, both economically and socially. Entrepreneurship is not only a driving force for job creation, competitiveness and growth; it also contributes to personal fulfilment and the achievement of social objectives. Moreover, numerous factors play a role in the decision to start up a business such as: the existence of a suitable opportunity or market; the perception that starting a company might be difficult due to red tape; financial obstacles; or the need to acquire new skills. That is why the EU considers that it has a duty to encourage entrepreneurial initiatives and unlock the growth potential of its businesses and citizens. Based on this fact, family businesses are of particular interest, mainly due to their long-term market orientation as well as significant contributions to GDP and added value growth in the economy.

In view of the above, the aim of the paper is to discuss the entrepreneurial potential of the EU citizens, with particular regard to aspects related to family businesses. The paper is a theoretical and empirical one. It deals with issues related to changes that occur within the family as well as its significance in the modern world, including economic life, and the specific attributes of family businesses. The empirical part presents the results of the survey FLASH EUROBAROMETER 354 on “Entrepreneurship”. The survey was carried out between 15th June and 8th August 2012 by TNS Political & Social, a consortium created between TNS political & social, TNS UK and TNS opinion.

In the final remarks, it was assessed that both formal and informal aspects related to the role which the married couple plays in the economy and society have an impact on

⁴ European Commission, *Supporting entrepreneurs and the self-employed*, <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=952>; European Commission, *Europe 2020 Strategy*, https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/european-semester/framework/europe-2020-strategy_en.

⁵ Centre for European Progression AISBL, *The Juncker investment plan – a major initiative to get Europe out of the trouble? Investing in youth*, Brussels, https://c4ep.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/CFEP_invplan_web.pdf.

establishing and running a family business. Furthermore, regardless of the fact that families do not have immutable qualities that can fuel growth under all circumstances, *familism*, recognised as loyalty and sacrifice of personal interests for the family, remains a source of entrepreneurial spirit. It is worth mentioning that family businesses are more longevity-oriented than non-family ones; most often they manage to survive market downfalls better, which is related to the ability of family members to resign from their profits.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW / THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1. Family Business – around conceptual divagation/discussion

What is in fact a family business? In the literature, there is no unequivocal definition of the concept of family business. The difficulty here consists in the fact that science has not yet developed clear criteria to distinguish this group of companies, which means that it encompasses companies with different legal forms, ownership, size and different management methods⁶. Likewise, there is no explicit definition of family business in the Polish-language literature. Based on the Civil Code, however, those companies whose owners (ownership gained through inheritance or capital contribution) are members of one family (e.g.: spouses) are considered to be family businesses⁷. This interpretation concerns, however, tax regulations and the Social Insurance Company.

The most common is to consider a family business as the kind of business that is owned by a family. The concept of the family household, i.e. a closed system in which its members are dependent on each other and integrated⁸, can be often found in the literature. It seems that according to the broadest concept, a family business is defined as an enterprise of any legal form, or a person conducting business activity, whose capital wholly or in a decisive part is owned by the family, and in which at least one member exercises a decisive influence over the management or holds a managerial position with the intent to permanently maintain the venture in the hands of the family⁹.

There are uncountable notions that can be found in the literature to describe a family business and there are many authors who reflect on the subject and present different definitions of family business¹⁰. There is, however, no unanimously accepted definition among authors and studies regarding this field. W.C. Handler, one of the main authors in the area, even stated that “*defining the family firm is the first and most obvious challenge facing*

⁶ Ł. Sułkowski, A. Marjański, *Firmy rodzinne, jak osiągnąć sukces w sztafecie pokoleń*, Warszawa 2009, p. 1.

⁷ K. Bondarowska, *Characteristic and developmental factors of family business in Poland, Characteristic and developmental factors of family business in Poland*, Wydawnictwo Politechniki Poznańskiej, Foundations of Control and Management Sciences, 2004, No. 2.

⁸ P. Sztompka, *Socjologia*, Warszawa 2002.

⁹ M. Malinowska, D. Seretna-Sałamaj, *The factors and Parameters Determining the Formation of the Target Capital Structure in Family Businesses* [in:] Z. Wilimowska, L. Borzowski, A. Grzech, J. Świątek (eds.) *Information Systems Architecture and Technology: Proceedings of 37th International Conference on Information Systems Architecture and Technology – ISAT 2016, Part IV*, Companyfamily.pl/documents/statute-association-initiative-party-family p. 169.

¹⁰ J.H. Astrachan, S.B. Klein, K.X. Smyrnios, *The F-PEC Scale of Family Influence: A Proposal for solving The Family Business Definition Problem*, *Family Business Review*, March 2002, Vol. XV, No. 1, p. 45.

*family business researchers*¹¹. Some researchers believe that a family business is the one in which it is possible to feature two generations that have made a significant contribution to the way the business is functioning. Other researchers claim that it is a business activity in which at least two family members participate, and the business belongs to one of them. There are also definitions that allow the situation in which the family business is a common property shared with an unrelated person, but members of the family are in possession of most of the company's shares¹². The criterion of the amount of shares in the business, however, is not the right criterion for differentiating family businesses from all other economic activities. Family members may own a modest amount of company's shares, but they may play an active role in the business and run it efficiently. In this particular situation, it is understandable to define such a company as a family business¹³.

A company founded by several partners or inherited by several family groups that share a significant number of cultural family traits can be considered a family business. J.A. Davis¹⁴ and R. Tagiuri call a family business, "(...) any business, large or small, public or privately owned, whose ownership is controlled by a single family and where two or more members of the same family significantly influence the business through their kinship ties, management and/or governance roles, or ownership rights." S. Hussain and L. Whitlock¹⁵ define a family business as "a firm where ownership is controlled by a single family, at least through control of the board and usually also through involvement in senior management". It is described as a company in which the majority of the capital or even its entirety is in the hands of the controlling family, or a group united by kinship relations. This form of economic activity "can be characterised as a business over which a family has substantial influence. This influence is present when the overall influence of family in terms of control and management is greater than that of other interested parties"¹⁶.

The conceptualisation of family business based on the systemic approach is relatively often encountered in the literature. In this approach, a family business is described as a complex system in which the family and the business emerge as two mutually dependent subsystems. It is understood that the unique nature of family business results from the overlapping of the systems and their mutual dependencies. The question on which researchers' attention is focused is related to the determination what systems are part of family business.

¹¹ W. Handler, *Methodological issues and considerations in studying family businesses*, Family Business Review, 1989, Vol. 2, No. 3, p. 258.

¹² P. Westhead, M. Cowling, C. Howorth, *The development of family companies: Management and ownership imperatives*, Family Business Review, 2001, Vol. 14(4), p. 369–385; S. Cromie, B. Stephenson, D. Monteith, *The management of family firms: An empirical investigation*, International Small Business Journal, 1995, Vol. 13(4), p. 11–34.

¹³ P. Davis, *Realizing the potential of the family business*, Organizational Dynamics, 1983, Vol. 12, No. 1, 1983, p. 47–56.

¹⁴ R. Tagiuri, J.A. Davis, *Bivalent attributes of the family firm*, Family Business Review, Summer 1996 (reprinted), Vol. 9, No. 2, <http://kimba.ku.ac.th/Document/1.pdf>, p. 199–208.

¹⁵ S. Hussain, L. Whitlock, *Corporate Governance – Quantity Versus Quality – Middle Eastern Perspective*, Published in eBook format by eBookIt.com, November 2009, <http://www.eBookIT.com>, p. 129

¹⁶ H. Neubauer, *The Dynamics of Succession in Family Businesses in Western European Countries*, Family Business Review, December 2003, No. 16(4), <https://oekonomica.files.wordpress.com/2013/12/the-dynamics-of-succession-in-family-businesses-in-western-european-countries.pdf>, p. 271.

The systemic approach takes into account, among others, a model encompassing the following subsystems/entities: the business, the family, and the founding entrepreneur (R. Beckhard i W. G. Dyer¹⁷). P. Davis¹⁸ confirms that the mutual interaction between two organisations/formations/systems, the family and the business, constitutes an important factor distinguishing a family business and determines its uniqueness. As a continuation, K. Gersick, J. Davis, M. Hampton and I. Lansberg¹⁹ state that a family business can be described using three independent but overlapping subsystems: the business, ownership and the family. The assessment of the affiliation of each person or group of persons that form parts of the system will be made based on the Three-Circle Model of the Family Business System. It became, and continues to be, the central organising framework for understanding family business systems. It can be used by academics, families, as well as consultants worldwide. This model shows, in simple graphic terms, the three interdependent and overlapping groups that the family business system consists of: the family, the business and ownership. This overlap results in seven interest groups, each of the groups is characterised by its own legitimate perspectives, objectives and dynamics. At a given moment, each member of the family business systems is assigned to only one of the above-mentioned categories. The long-term success of family business system relies on the functioning and mutual support provided by each of these groups.

Persons associated with the company only through one of the subsystems find themselves in the appropriate outer circle, e.g.: family members not working for the company and without any share in the business are only in the family circle, while employees that are non-family members and have no share in the company are in the outer business circle. Similarly, shareholders who are non-family members and do not work for the company are in the outer ownership circle. Persons affiliated with the company through at least two subsystems are in one of the areas resulting from the overlapping of the systems. The dependencies between the subsystems are shown in the figure below.

An important feature of this approach is the fact that the subsystems overlap. The family subsystem consists of individual family members. It is based on feelings and is oriented towards providing education and security. The subsystem is focused around satisfying the interests and aspirations of family members. Employees at different company levels, including managers, are components of the business subsystem. Their task is to achieve the set development goals and to ensure maximum efficiency. The ownership subsystem consists of all business owners – both family members and outsiders. This subsystem influences the efficient management of the business, the establishment of its mission, and the setting of its goals.

¹⁷ R. Beckhard, W.G. Dyer, *Managing change in the family firm: issues and strategies*, Sloan Management Review, 1983, No. 24 (3), s. 59–65; W.G. Dyer, W. Handler, *Entrepreneurship and family business: Exploring the Connections*, Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice, 1994, Fall, p. 71–83, <http://docplayer.net/19084356-Entrepreneurship-and-family-business-exploring-the-connections.html>.

¹⁸ P. Davis, *Realizing the potential of the family business*, Organizational Dynamics, 1983, No. 12 (1), p. 47–56.

¹⁹ See: K. Gersick, J. Davis, M. Hampton, I. Lansberg, *Generation to generation lifecycles of the family business*, Harvard Business School Press, Boston, 1997.

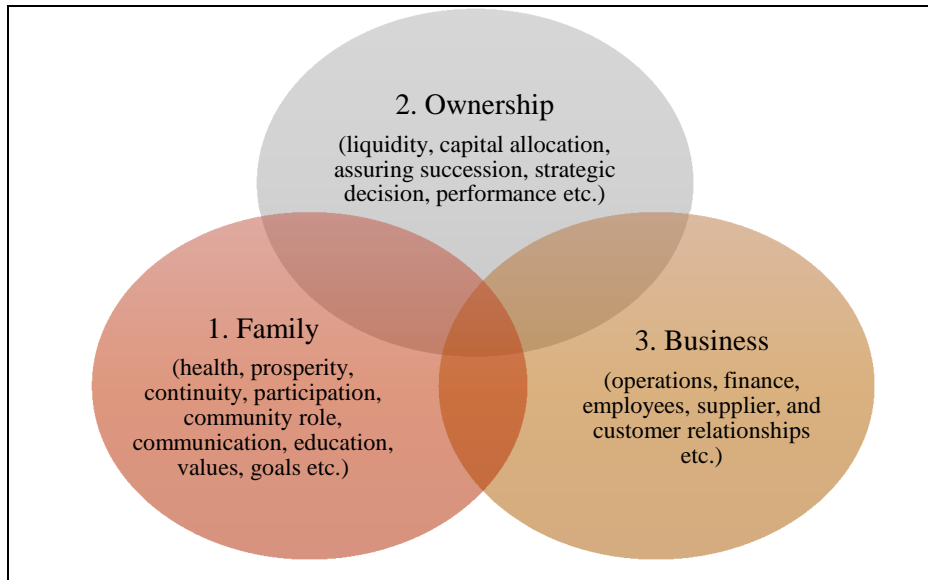


Fig. 1. The 3-circle model of a family business

Source: K. Gersick, J. Davis, M. Hampton, I. Lansberg, *Generation to generation lifecycles of the family business*, Boston 1997, p. 6.

Where:

- 1 – A family member who is neither an owner nor an employee.
- 2 – An owner who is neither a family member nor an employee.
- 3 – An employee who is neither an owner nor a family member.
- 4 – A family member who is an owner but not an employee.
- 5 – An owner who is an employee but is not a family member.
- 6 – An employee who is a family member but not an owner.
- 7 – An owner who is a family member and an employee.

The universality and uniqueness of this model stem from the fact that it allows family members and non-family members to be “mapped”. For instance, Eduard is a family member, an owner, and a manager, his sister, Alexandra, is a family member and an owner, their cousin, Paulo, is a family member but neither an owner nor an employee, and so on. Once the map is created, an appreciation for how different people in the family business will see the world differently, depending on their perspective, can be developed.

Each of the distinguished subsystems is additionally characterised by its own unique attributes. Development model of family business is presented below.

The premise for creating the above-mentioned model was the two-system model which served to clarify the uniqueness of family businesses among the group of other economic entities. The model was made up of two areas divided into the family and the business²⁰.

²⁰ See: R. Tagiuri, J.A. Davis, *Bivalent attributes of the family firm*, *Family Business Review*, Summer 1996 (reprinted), Vol. 9, No. 2, <http://kimba.ku.ac.th/Document/1.pdf>, p. 199–208.

The 'dual system' approach to family business research has been criticised for various reasons, including its neglect of other important subsystems. The criticism has led to the development of multi-system models including ownership along with the 'family' and 'business' components.

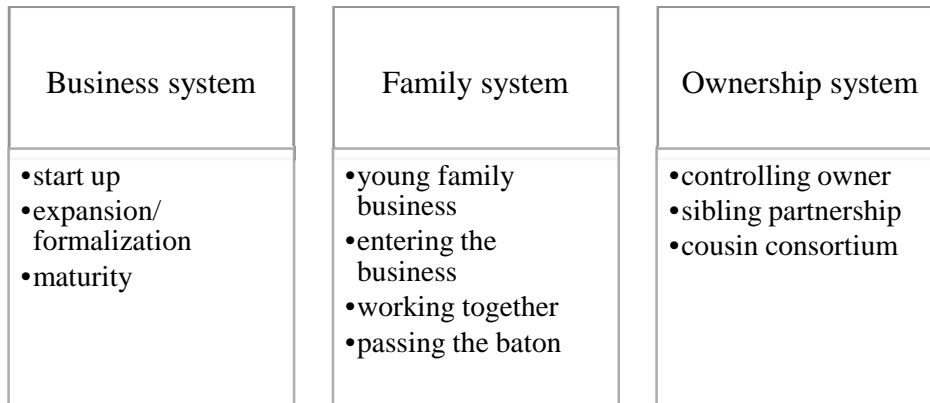


Fig. 2. Three-Dimensional Development Model

Source: K. Gersick, J. Davis, M. Hampton, I. Lansberg, *Generation to generation...*

2.2. Importance of Family Business in Economy and Society

Family businesses are the most key actors that make up the global economy. They are by far the most popular form of doing business in the majority of developed economies. At the same time, they are the epitome of the spirit of the free market economy as reflected in the role of individual entrepreneurship and innovation. In the modern economy, family businesses are one of the key sources of wealth creation and employment growth. The economic development of the country is largely determined by the condition of family businesses and their tendency to grow and invest²¹.

Historically, family businesses are, for the most part, enduring institutions. Their importance parallels socio-cultural and technological advances, as well as the globalisation-related new market order. The economic necessity of earning a living and supporting one's family often provides the underlying motivation for starting and expanding business activity. Among others, goals related to lifestyle improvement and wealth accumulation play an important role in motivating a family member to start a business with other family members. The business provides income to the family, while the family serves as a critical supply of paid and unpaid labour, contributing additional resources to the business such as money, space, equipment and other factors of production²². The family home often serves as an incubator for the germination of business ideas and ventures, in and out of the home, as well

²¹ W. Handler, *Methodological issues and considerations in studying family businesses*, "Family Business Review" 1989, Vol. 2, No. 3, p. 257–276.

²² K.X. Smyrnios, P.Z.Poutziouris, S. Klein (eds.), *Handbook of Research on Family Business*, Second Edition, Edward Elgar, Cheltenham, UK, Northampton, MA, USA, 2013, p. 507–508.

as a storefront or a factory. The home is often the birthplace of entrepreneurial ventures²³. In addition, family business founders and their successors are usually accountable to themselves and are known to maintain a strong sense of family and community responsibility. As a result, family businesses tend to offer greater opportunities for mutual loyalty, responsibility, and accountability between the organisation and its employees²⁴. Family businesses are also generally characterised by a more direct contact with management, less bureaucracy, and a built-in trust factor. Family-owned companies also allow the next generation to gain early exposure to the business through hands-on training. These factors, in turn, lead to a continuity in management policies and operating focus, enabling these companies to react more rapidly to changes in their environments²⁵. These are just some of the attributes of family businesses.

“One business owner expressed it well when he said he put on his manager’s hat when he fired an underperforming and frequently tardy son; but he put on his family hat afterwards and said, “I just heard you lost your job. Is there anything I can do to help?””²⁶ The figure below summarises general characteristics of family businesses²⁷.

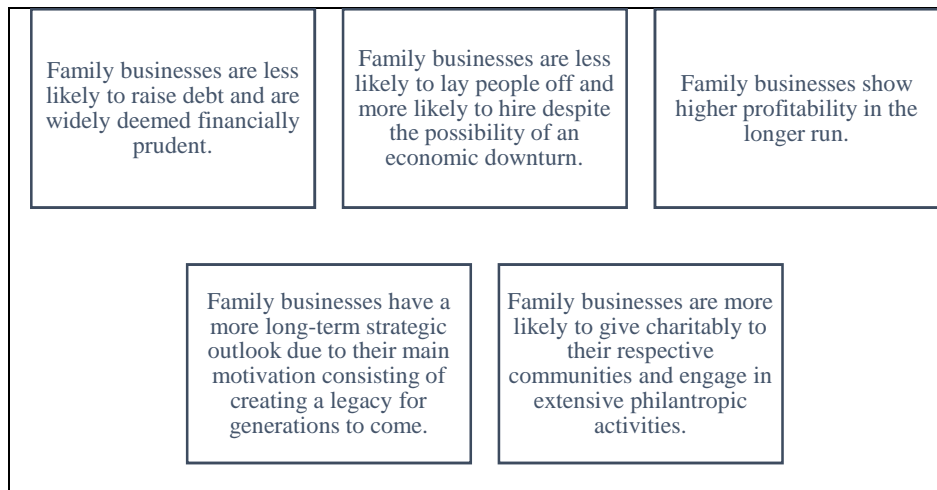


Fig. 3. General characteristics of family businesses

Source: Results and graphics are available at the FFI – Family Firm Institute Global Data Points. (<http://www.ffi.org/page/globaldatapoints>).

²³ *Ibidem*, p. 81.

²⁴ R. Kleiman, E. Peacock, *Family Businesses as an Economic Phenomenon*, “Michigan Family Review” 1996, Winter, Vol. 02, Issue 2, p. 93–101.

²⁵ *Ibidem*.

²⁶ J.L. Ward, *Perpetuating the Family Business, 50 Lessons Learned from Long-Lasting, Successful Families in Business*, New York 2004, pp. 13–15.

²⁷ Results and graphics are available at the FFI – Family Firm Institute Global Data Points. (<http://www.ffi.org/page/globaldatapoints>).

Family businesses are unique business entities in which family relationships constitute an integral part. The main reason for running a family business which does not employ workers from the outside is the need to provide financial stability. Moreover, in the process of running the business, family members are concentrated on the interests of future generations. An important feature of family business is the fact that it is established from scratch by family members. They put a lot of effort into the business by financing it together, creating growth perspectives, looking for the appropriate direction and realising their concepts. The founders of the family business treat it as their own child and believe that shaping the business in the right way will assure its efficient functioning and growth²⁸.

Members of the family are involved in the growth of the business more than the persons from the outside since the family's future is dependent on its appropriate functioning. They make important decisions together, solve problems and look for the best perspectives of growth. Each member of the family has at least a partial impact on the process of running the business. Their opinions enable the perception of problems from different perspectives and the choice of the best possible plan/solution. Family businesses are not focused on the rapid growth and generating high income. These are supposed to be entities which will be functioning effectively through many years and will provide a stable financial situation for the whole family. They are concentrated on non-current investments. Working in the family business consists in creating a suitable status in terms of life of the business and life of the family. This will guarantee proper and healthy relationships between its members, providing employment, continuing the previous generation's activities while enjoying the possibility of shaping something special²⁹.

Family businesses are usually smaller and less formalised structures than big companies. Due to this fact, any actions are taken in a less formalised way. The decisions can be made in the comfort of one's home in a relaxing, pleasant atmosphere. This method of running a business provides a possibility of a rapid response to the economic situation or other unexpected factors³⁰.

A family business has a qualitative and social character. It is an entity which is difficult to evaluate unambiguously. The target, the assumed and welcomed model of family business functioning, can be defined as a reflection of the family business. Such a business has its features, e.g.: continuation, objectivity in dealing with the social potential, a rational attitude towards foreign sources of financing, the ability to run the business in a professional way, care about quality, success in the appropriate moment, high awareness of the company's identity and character, shaping the positive image, creating a model for other businesses and the activity in favour of socio-cultural and natural environment³¹.

Family businesses are transferred to the next generation through inheritance. The prospect of transmission to an offspring encourages/forces the owner to put a greater effort into

²⁸ B. Javetski, C. Murphy, M. Staples (eds.), *Perspectives on Founder- and Family-Owned Businesses*, McKinsey & Company, October 2014, http://www.aidaf.it/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Perspectives_on_founder_and_family-owned_businesses.pdf; H. Kałuża, *Firmy rodzinne w XXI wieku – specyfika i sukcesja*, EIOGZ, 2009, No. 75, p. 52–53.

²⁹ H. Kałuża, *Firmy rodzinne w XXI wieku – specyfika i sukcesja*, EIOGZ, 2009, No. 75, p. 53.

³⁰ W. Gibiec, *Charakterystyka firm rodzinnych*, cz. 1, *Biznes Rodzinny w Polsce*, 2006, No. 5, p. 15–16.

³¹ Ł. Niemczal, *Rola więzi rodzinnych w kontekście sukcesji przedsiębiorstw rodzinnych*, *ZN WSH Zarządzanie*, 2015, No. (3), p. 70–72.

preserving the company in the best possible condition. It is in fact part of the family heritage³².

Running a family business is treated as a way of life. The owners often spend all their time and energy on the development of the company and have no time to rest. In this type of activity, it is difficult to separate the family life from the professional life. Both parts are intertwined. Family matters are transferred to the substrate unions. For example, the conflict between spouses running a family-owned company is transferred to the relationship between the same people who are co-workers of one company³³.

The separation of the professional sphere of life from the private sphere is almost unachievable. It is nearly impossible to avoid talking about the company during meals or on holidays, and thinking about the company constantly. The boundaries between work time and leisure are difficult to maintain as well. Also, longer holidays are not possible, even if all decisions were to be taken and the direction of the operations clearly defined³⁴.

An important factor in the success of a family business is the motivation of its employees. Each family member is involved in the activities of the company because he or she identifies with its values and mission. Due to their strong commitment, employees often work for a small salary, which would not have been accepted by a worker from outside the family. The aim of the family business is not only to maintain the financial stability of the company but also to secure its development, as well as its continuing and long-term legacy³⁵.

An important part of running a family business is the issue of inheritance. Often, appropriate steps regarding the appointment of an heir are not taken in time, which causes conflicts in the family. There are several reasons why family business owners do not take care of succession. One of them is a lack of knowledge about the consequences of the absence of such a plan. Also, people often do not want to think about their own death, preferring to pretend that it is not imminent. Sometimes, business owners are afraid of losing control and limiting their opportunities. Other times, it is an expression of the belief that no-one else can run the company as well as they do. It can also stem from the fear that their children will want to change the management of the company, which can destroy what the owners have created with their hard work and commitment. A major problem is also the choice of heirs among the offspring³⁶. A family entrepreneur (incumbent) is often afraid to make a choice, to decide who will take over the company, which was so painstakingly created and developed over the years.

Transferring company to next generations obviously means changes. New owners bring their own values, beliefs and ambitions. The process of change is not always pleasant. It is necessary for all the participants of the process to learn how to function in the new situation. Some important tips are listed below:

³² Q. Fleming, *Tajniki przetrwania firmy rodzinnej*, Wydawnictwo One Press Small Business, 2000, p. 105.

³³ H. Kałuża, *Firmy rodzinne w XXI wieku – specyfika i sukcesja*, EIOGZ, 2009, No. 75, p. 54.

³⁴ T. Ciąpała, *Wartość firmy rodzinnej*, Biznes Rodzinny w Polsce, January 2006, No. 1, p. 8.

³⁵ G. Skrojny, *Pokolenia perspektyw i perspektywy pokoleń w biznesie rodzinnym*, Biznes Rodzinny w Polsce, Wyzwania i Perspektywy, 2006, No. 1, p. 7–9.

³⁶ J. Jamer, *Sukcesja własności i władzy w firmie rodzinnej*, Biznes Rodzinny w Polsce, 2006, No. 5, s. 7–9.

- The company interests should be a priority.
- Appointments of family members to company positions should not be discretionary. They should be made respecting the person's merits and achievements that benefit the company.
- In the absence of competent heirs, the sale of the company is a better option³⁷.

Family businesses, similarly to other economic entities, face many different problems and difficulties. In addition to the typical business-related troubles, family businesses also face other more specific difficulties. They primarily result from the need to reconcile family and business priorities, which are not always complementary to each other. Potential hazards include: (1) transfer of family conflicts to the professional field and vice versa, (2) difficulties in resolving intergenerational conflicts and disagreements, (3) planning and selecting the right strategy for the succession process. Short-term thinking can be the biggest problem that companies face, regardless of ownership structure. In this context, family businesses, for which the long-term perspective is key, can be one of the best remedies³⁸.

The future of the company, however, is one of the main themes that can cause intra-family conflicts. In the absence of competent heirs, a better option is to sell the company. It is a chance and an interesting alternative for those companies where there is no interest among the family members in the continuation of the company and the acquisition of the parental legacy. The decision to sell the business must, however, be made in advance as the implementation of the project requires careful planning. On the other hand, leaving the business in the hands of the family is a big responsibility and a challenge, both for incumbents and for successors. The next generation should actively participate in the life of the company, learn about it every day, and prepare for a new role in the future. Representatives of the younger generation need time to define their expectations and aspirations both in terms of personal development and business development. Choosing family members to perform specific functions in the company in the future is not only a difficult task but also a topic that can lead to internal misunderstandings. In such a situation, limiting or eliminating conflicts is very important. In the short term, the conflicts can hinder the performance of current business tasks. In the long term, such conflicts are a real threat to the effective process of succession encompassing power and property transfer in a family business. It should be noted, however, that the "beauty" of family businesses is largely derived from their multiple-generation nature. The combination of openness to change and great commitment of the young generation with the life and work experience of their parents often yields very good results. More risky ideas and undertakings, i.e. more innovative and pro-developmental ones, have a chance to be realised. The introduction of the next generation into the company must be accompanied by respect for the relationships resulting from the coexistence of the three subsystems referred to earlier (see the Three-Circle model). The young generation is required to pay particular attention to the manner and form of communication. This is especially true in the case of family businesses where the persons perform roles simultaneously in at least two subsystems. Each subsystem has different rules, expectations and

³⁷ Q. Fleming, *Tajniki ...*, p. 106; H. Kałuża, *Firmy rodzinne w XXI wieku – specyfika i sukcesja*, EIOGZ, 2009, No. 75, pp. 55–56.

³⁸ W. Bennis, *On Becoming a Leader*, New York 2009.

aspirations. The holistic approach allows to avoid mistakes and create a good personal and business image³⁹.

3. METHODS AND DATA SOURCE

The results of the work of the European Commission, and more precisely of the Directorate-General for Enterprise and Industry which since 2000 has conducted a survey on entrepreneurial attitudes, are the primary source of data presented in the paper. The first edition of the research included all the EU Member States at the time (15 countries) plus the United States, Iceland and Norway. Since then it has expanded steadily to incorporate more countries over time. The last survey, the results of which were discussed in the report Flash Eurobarometer No 354 "Entrepreneurship in the EU and beyond", covers in total 50 countries. The number includes the 27 EU countries at the time of the survey⁴⁰, as well as 13 countries from outside the EU. Several of these non-EU countries are included in the study for the first time, namely Brazil, Israel, India and Russia. All editions of the report are devoted to the issues of entrepreneurship development, as well as techniques, methods and solutions stimulating entrepreneurial attitudes, including the entrepreneurial way of thinking. They also encompass factors that are conducive to taking entrepreneurial initiatives and encourage people to become entrepreneurs. The data presented in the report show the attitude of citizens towards entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial education, risk-taking, business creation, obstacles to undertaking entrepreneurial activities and failure in running their own business. In 2009, the survey covered 19,635 people from the EU-27, including 1,005 Polish citizens, while in 2012 the study involved 42,080 people including 1000 Poles. The first edition, in 2000, included 8,347 people from the EU-15 and the United States. Poland has participated in the surveys since 2004.

Between 15th June and 8th August 2012, the TNS Political & Social, a consortium created between TNS political & social, TNS UK and TNS opinion, carried out the survey FLASH EUROBAROMETER 354 on "Entrepreneurship". It covers the population of the respective nationalities of the European Union Member States, residents in each of the 27 Member States aged 15 years and over. It has also been conducted in Croatia, Turkey, Iceland, Norway, Switzerland, Israel, Russia, China, Japan, South Korea, India, Brazil and the United States. This survey has been requested by the European Commission, the Directorate-General Enterprise and Industry. It is a general public survey co-ordinated by the Directorate-General for Communication ("Research and Speechwriting" Unit). All interviews were carried using the TNS e-Call centre (the centralised CATI system), except in Israel, China, India, Japan, South Korea and Brazil. In every country respondents were called both on fixed lines and mobile phones (except in India where the interviews were conducted face-to-face). Over 42,000 respondents from different social and demographic groups were interviewed in their mother tongue on behalf of the Directorate-General Enterprise and Industry. The basic sample design applied in all the states is multi-stage random

³⁹ G. McCann, *Rozwój firm rodzinnych dla i poprzez następne pokolenia*, MBA, 2003, No. 3, p. 13 (przekład z angielskiego E. Niebała), http://peritus.weebly.com/uploads/9/2/0/8/9208219/rozwj_firm_rodzinnych_dla_i_poprzez_nastpne_pokolenia.pdf

⁴⁰ This survey edition was carried out between 15th June and 8th August 2012. It presents results concerning all the current Member States, i.e. the EU 28. At that time, Croatia was a country outside the EU.

(probability). In each household, the respondent was drawn at random following the “last birthday rule”.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The report *Entrepreneurship in the EU and beyond* indicates that 37% citizens of the EU are interested in running their own businesses. This means that at least every third resident of the Community manifests the entrepreneurial attitude. However, the vast majority, nearly six out of ten EU citizens, declare willingness to have full-time employment. This marks a change since the previous survey conducted in December 2009 as the responses then were more evenly split: 45% expressed a preference for being self-employed, while 49% for being an employee. The falling interest in running one's own business is in the long term also a threat to family businesses. However, the presented survey edition was carried out after a wave of the global financial crisis, which, at least in the short term, could have been for many people a disincentive to risk-taking, i.e. running their own business ventures.

The results of the most recent survey allow to draw some general conclusions. Firstly, inhabitants of Lithuania, Croatia, Bulgaria, Greece, Latvia, Cyprus, Romania, Portugal and Italy are most interested in being self-employed. Secondly, in the north of the continent, in Denmark, Sweden and Finland, a clear prevalence of people interested in full-time employment can be seen. Thirdly, the preference to be employed is much more evident in the countries of the former EU-15, among others, in Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands, Austria, and the United Kingdom. In Poland, approx. 470 respondents expressed the desire to run their own business, while approx. 500 respondents opted for being employed. Differences in preferences are therefore negligible.

Also, socio-demographic factors, such as gender, age, the nature of the work performed, and education differentiate the respondents because of their preferences for self-employment. More interest in self-employment is shown by men (2012 – 42%, 2009 – 51%) than by women (2012 – 33%, 2009 – 39%). Similarly, younger respondents are more apt to express a preference for self-employment: 45% of 15-24 year-olds would prefer to be self-employed, as opposed to 35-37% of people in the three older age groups. Self-employed is more likely to be chosen by persons with a university degree than by those with a lower level of education or still learning⁴¹. In addition, parents' professional path is also an important determinant of children's preferences. In families in which one of the parents ran their own business, 55.8% of children stated the desire to have their own business. Whereas in families without entrepreneurial traditions, only 41.8% of children stated the desire to be self-employed⁴². This confirms that children are happy to choose and continue their parents' careers.

Personal independence and self-fulfilment are the main motivators for undertaking business activity for the largest group of the respondents (EU27 – 62%). Factors that also stimulate the respondents to become self-employed include freedom to choose place and time of working (EU27 – 30%) as well as better income prospects (EU27 – 16%). Then also the following elements are mentioned: exploiting a business opportunity (EU27 – 4%) and

⁴¹ Flash Eurobarometer, *Entrepreneurship...*, 2012, p. 18.

⁴² Flash Eurobarometer, *Entrepreneurship...*, May 2010, p. 111.

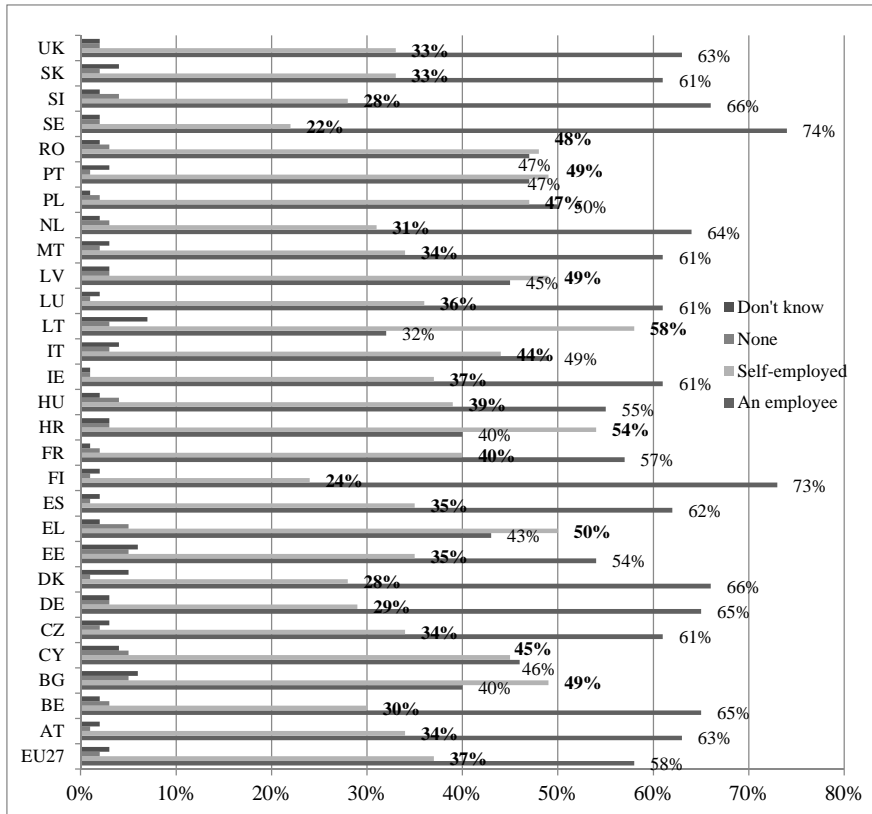


Fig. 4. The respondents' preferences in terms of form of employment – distribution of responses for the EU Member States

Source: Flash Eurobarometer, *Entrepreneurship in the EU and beyond. Analytical Report*, Series 354, 2012, http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/flash/fl_354_en.pdf

a lack of attractive employment opportunities/a lack of employment opportunities (EU27 – 2%). The results of this comparison, however, should be combined with the responses to the question concerning the preferred form of employment. In the countries where the respondents were more likely to choose full-time employment (Sweden, Finland, Denmark, Slovenia, Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands, and Great Britain), the attractiveness of self-employment is largely perceived from the perspective of freedom to choose place and time of working. The weakest negative correlation occurs in the case of better income prospects. The situation is different in the countries where the interest in self employment prevails over the interest in full-time employment. Better income prospects are the primary motivation for self-employment in Lithuania, Greece, Romania, Poland, Cyprus, Hungary, the Czech Republic or Malta. In addition, Lithuanians, Latvians, Poles, Cypriots, Hungarians, Czechs, and Maltese value self-employment for the possibility of exploiting a business opportunity. Personal independence and self-fulfilment are primarily indicated by the respondents in these countries (Ireland, Luxembourg, Spain, Estonia) where the interest in

self-employment oscillates around the average level (EU27 – 37%). The independence associated with owning a business is also identified as important by the French, Dutch, Czechs, Greeks and Poles.

Tab. 1. Reasons for which the respondents choose self-employment

	Personal independence/ self-fulfilment	Exploiting a business opportunity	Better income prospects	Freedom to choose place and time of working	Lack of attractive employment opportunities/lack of employment opportunities	Members of family / friends are self-employed	Favourable economic climate	To avoid the uncertainties related to paid employment	To contribute to society
EU27	62%	4%	16%	30%	2%	1%	2%	3%	2%
AT	56%	5%	12%	29%	1%	1%	0%	2%	2%
BE	53%	2%	16%	38%	1%	3%	2%	1%	2%
BG	56%	5%	17%	26%	2%	0%	2%	3%	2%
CY	60%	8%	20%	32%	3%	1%	8%	3%	3%
CZ	67%	7%	24%	32%	1%	2%	4%	4%	2%
DE	64%	5%	14%	25%	2%	2%	1%	4%	3%
DK	59%	5%	14%	42%	4%	1%	3%	3%	2%
EE	66%	7%	16%	49%	1%	2%	0%	3%	3%
EL	66%	5%	28%	23%	3%	1%	7%	3%	2%
ES	67%	3%	10%	22%	2%	1%	2%	1%	1%
FI	57%	2%	7%	47%	3%	1%	2%	0%	1%
FR	71%	2%	12%	35%	1%	0%	0%	2%	0%
HR	62%	7%	18%	28%	2%	1%	2%	5%	1%
HU	58%	11%	20%	16%	7%	4%	7%	11%	5%
IE	72%	3%	12%	43%	3%	3%	1%	2%	2%
IT	62%	3%	17%	31%	1%	1%	2%	2%	2%
LT	59%	8%	29%	28%	5%	3%	4%	7%	6%
LU	69%	7%	12%	33%	2%	1%	2%	6%	6%
LV	62%	10%	14%	37%	2%	2%	3%	4%	2%
MT	61%	8%	27%	29%	1%	3%	6%	3%	1%
NL	69%	8%	10%	38%	1%	2%	1%	2%	2%
PL	65%	8%	24%	23%	3%	2%	1%	5%	1%
PT	55%	6%	16%	23%	2%	2%	4%	3%	3%
RO	54%	3%	26%	26%	2%	1%	4%	2%	2%
SE	44%	9%	10%	51%	1%	5%	5%	2%	6%
SI	54%	17%	26%	36%	2%	3%	5%	6%	2%
SK	56%	6%	22%	27%	2%	3%	6%	3%	1%
UK	49%	2%	7%	39%	3%	1%	2%	2%	1%

Source: Flash Eurobarometer, *Entrepreneurship in the EU and beyond. Analytical Report*, Series 354, 2012, http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/flash/fl_354_en.pdf

From the point of view of the subject matter of the paper, the respondents' answers to the question *Suppose you could choose between working for different kinds of companies, which one would you prefer?* have a high cognitive value. There were only two types of answers to choose from, i.e. a family business or a publicly listed company/private company not family owned. The interest of the respondents in employment in a family business can be a confirmation of the overall public trust in family-run businesses. Employment in a family business is most often chosen by residents of Germany, Austria, Greece, France,

Belgium and Luxembourg. The fact that approx. 41% of the EU citizens prefer to work in family-owned businesses, compared to 48% who choose to work for non-family businesses, demonstrates that family businesses have a good reputation and that their owners are considered good employers. The history of Polish family business is not very long due to the political system that prevailed in the country until 1990. Hence, the discrepancies in preferences are quite clear. As many as 37% of the surveyed Poles would prefer to work for a company run by family members. Poland is therefore approaching the EU average.

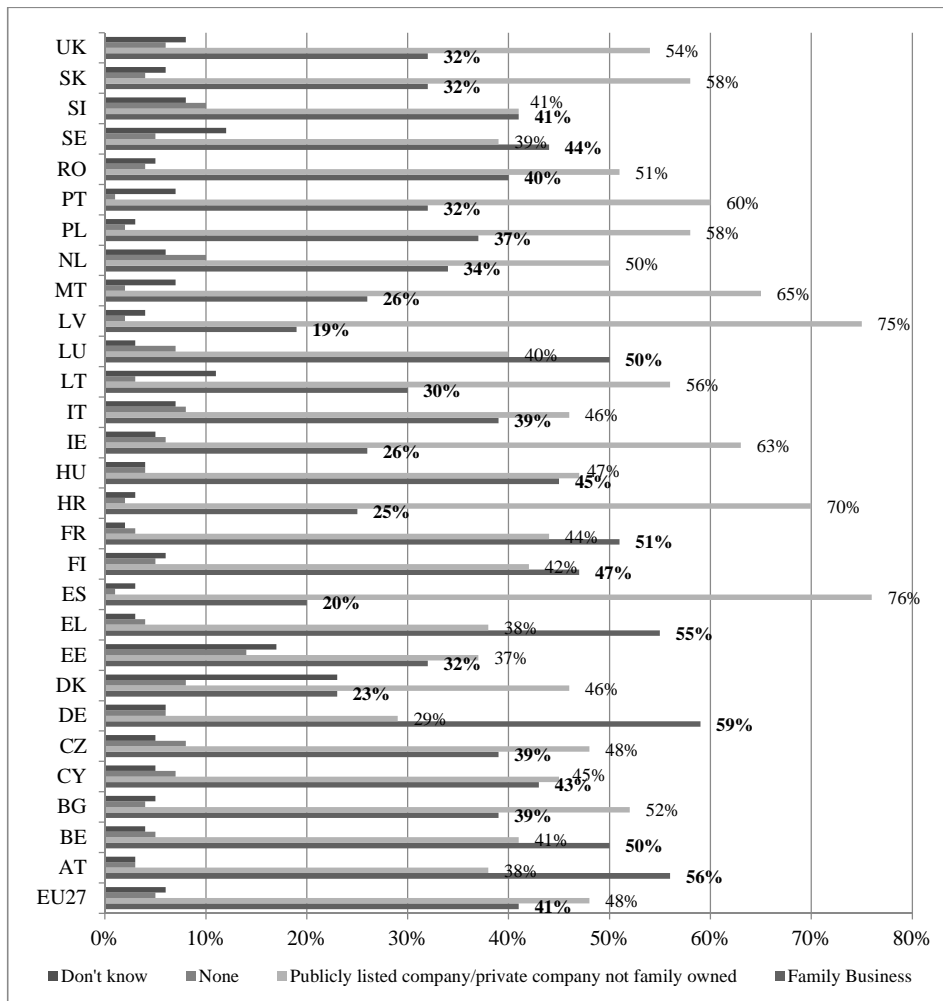


Fig. 5. The respondents' preferences in terms of form of employment by type of employer/company – distribution of responses for the EU Member States

Source: Flash Eurobarometer, *Entrepreneurship in the EU and beyond. Analytical Report*, Series 354, 2012, http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/flash/fl_354_en.pdf

If a preference for employment in a family business is expressed, then why? The diagram presents averages for all the Member States (EU-27). Based on the answers provided by the respondents, the benefits associated with family businesses include: (1) better working conditions, (2) stronger commitment to the local community, (3) a long-term view by the owners. While choosing employment in non-family businesses, including large publicly listed companies, the respondents were driven by factors such as: job security, more personal training, learning, and development, higher wages, faster career progression, and international mobility. International mobility is an immanent feature of large companies whose operations in foreign markets are commonplace. Only in Croatia, a higher percentage of responses to *international mobility* was registered in the case of family businesses than non-family ones.

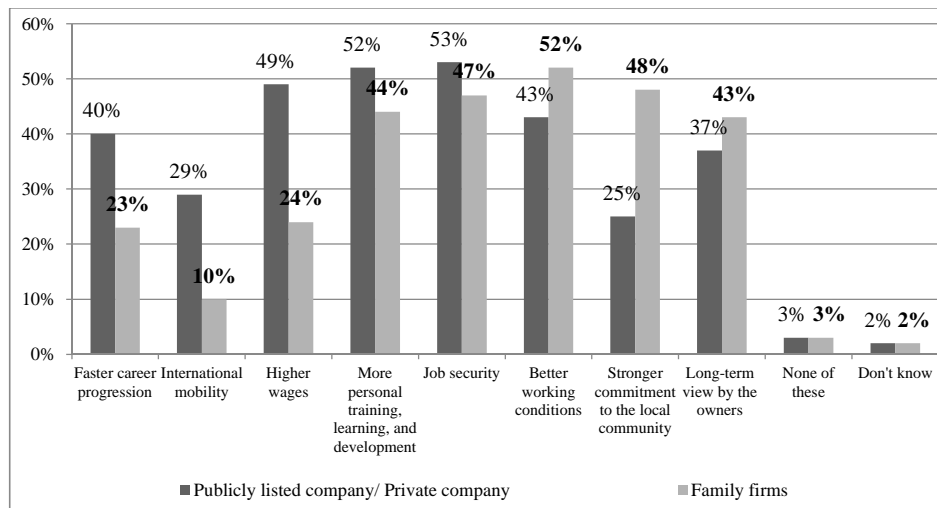


Fig. 6. Comparison of benefits associated with employment in a family business and a private company – distribution of the EU-27 average

Source: Flash Eurobarometer, *Entrepreneurship in the EU and beyond. Analytical Report, Series 354*, 2012, http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/flash/fl_354_en.pdf

The distribution of responses to: *Explain why you would prefer to work for a family business* is a confirmation of differences in the perception of family business as an employer of the first choice by the respondents from the individual EU countries. The strongest differences in terms of benefits associated with employment in a family business occur in relation to international mobility ($V_s = 64\%$), stronger commitment to the local community ($V_s = 50\%$), as well as more personal training, learning, and development ($V_s = 49\%$). The respondents were most in agreement with respect to two variants of responses, i.e. job security and better working conditions. Out of these two, better working conditions are definitely the strength of family businesses compared to non non-family ones. Only the Bulgarians, Croatians, Danes, and the Irish more often indicate that working conditions are more favourable in publicly listed companies/private companies than in family owned ones. In

comparison with the EU-27 average, according to the respondents surveyed, a Polish family business employer is more focused on providing job security than private companies that are not family owned. Higher wages and a long-term view by the owners are another two benefits. The obvious weakness of Polish family businesses is their small international mobility. Only 7% of the respondents choosing a family business indicated the possibility of a development opportunity due to international mobility.

Tab. 2. Benefits associated with employment in a family business – distribution of responses for the EU Member States

Country code	Faster career progression	International mobility	Higher wages	More personal training, learning, and development	Job security	Better working conditions	Stronger commitment to the local community	Long-term view by the owners
EU27	23%	10%	24%	44%	47%	52%	48%	43%
AT	27%	15%	24%	55%	45%	54%	52%	47%
BE	33%	19%	32%	70%	72%	78%	72%	58%
BG	20%	12%	42%	18%	44%	24%	15%	21%
CY	20%	9%	26%	27%	37%	64%	24%	26%
CZ	26%	13%	45%	49%	66%	74%	57%	62%
DE	26%	12%	19%	59%	52%	52%	59%	52%
DK	11%	4%	9%	23%	18%	30%	27%	21%
EE	9%	7%	13%	15%	36%	31%	30%	22%
EL	24%	12%	27%	32%	46%	70%	36%	33%
ES	26%	10%	24%	48%	49%	48%	41%	43%
FI	16%	9%	18%	34%	37%	39%	53%	40%
FR	23%	5%	14%	25%	27%	47%	40%	18%
HR	25%	11%	26%	25%	26%	26%	15%	28%
HU	11%	6%	24%	18%	50%	43%	34%	39%
IE	20%	8%	16%	40%	35%	35%	53%	47%
IT	8%	1%	13%	24%	29%	45%	21%	20%
LT	20%	8%	22%	26%	41%	38%	22%	40%
LU	42%	32%	39%	66%	67%	78%	69%	60%
LV	24%	15%	55%	39%	54%	46%	38%	46%
MT	14%	0%	8%	9%	18%	24%	6%	14%
NL	8%	10%	12%	51%	37%	39%	44%	39%
PL	16%	7%	33%	19%	45%	32%	28%	33%
PT	50%	29%	41%	61%	73%	68%	63%	58%
RO	21%	9%	43%	26%	52%	31%	18%	22%
SE	12%	9%	23%	40%	35%	46%	51%	44%
SI	22%	7%	24%	25%	24%	36%	20%	25%
SK	23%	18%	34%	34%	50%	58%	30%	44%
UK	39%	18%	44%	75%	75%	80%	82%	82%

Source: Flash Eurobarometer, *Entrepreneurship in the EU and beyond. Analytical Report*, Series 354, 2012, http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/flash/fl_354_en.pdf.

Tab. 3. Motivators for starting business activity provided by the respondents in the individual EU Member States

	...because you came across an opportunity	...out of necessity	...because there was a need/opportunity to take over the business from a family member	Don't know
EU27	49%	29%	15%	7%
AT	45%	19%	24%	12%
BE	54%	13%	23%	10%
BG	42%	37%	17%	4%
CY	47%	33%	15%	5%
CZ	56%	33%	7%	4%
DE	46%	28%	19%	7%
DK	76%	10%	10%	4%
EE	47%	42%	4%	7%
EL	35%	42%	18%	5%
ES	40%	38%	17%	5%
FI	66%	20%	10%	4%
FR	50%	27%	15%	8%
HR	43%	32%	18%	7%
HU	54%	31%	11%	4%
IE	57%	22%	15%	6%
IT	43%	20%	25%	12%
LT	55%	30%	9%	6%
LU	60%	20%	15%	5%
LV	57%	26%	14%	3%
MT	54%	21%	20%	5%
NL	67%	11%	13%	9%
PL	50%	32%	11%	7%
PT	54%	27%	15%	4%
RO	43%	45%	9%	3%
SE	56%	13%	20%	11%
SI	46%	30%	17%	7%
SK	59%	24%	9%	8%
UK	53%	30%	7%	10%

Source: Flash Eurobarometer, *Entrepreneurship in the EU and beyond. Analytical Report*, Series 354, 2012, http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/flash/fl_354_en.pdf

22.7% of the respondents answered YES to the question: *Have you ever started a business, taken over one or are you taking steps to start one?(question_13)*. Basically, however, at least three out of four respondents did not conduct their own business activity and did not take any steps in this direction. The answer to this question was clarified by the respondents' comments on the following statement: *All in all, would you say you started or are starting your business...: (1) because I came across an opportunity, (2) out of necessity, (3) because*

there was a need/opportunity to take over the business from a family member. The table presents the motivators for starting business activity provided by the respondents in the individual EU Member States. It includes only the respondents that provided a positive answer to question_13. The vast majority of the respondents, as many as 4 out of 5, have already started business activity or taken over a company (5,062 respondents). Only 17.5% are just taking steps to start or take over a business. The most common variant of the response was: *I came across an opportunity* (49%). Emerging opportunities are a factor triggering the desire to run their own business. For many respondents (approx. 15%), however, the main motivation for undertaking business activity was *a need or an opportunity to take over the business from a family member*. In 8 countries, this variant was chosen by a much higher percentage of respondents than the EU average. This situation occurred in Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Spain, Germany, Italy, Sweden, Slovenia and Malta. In Poland, for 11% of the respondents the continuation of family business traditions has provided an opportunity for running their own company.

The respondents were also asked to specify their current professional situation – *As far as your current occupation is concerned, would you say you are self-employed, an employee, a manual worker or would you say that you are without a professional activity? Does it mean that you are a...* Approx. 10% of the respondents chose the self-employed variant among the answers. The question addressed to the self-employed people is an interesting continuation of this thread: *Have you started your business from scratch, have you taken it over from another business owner, or is your business a family business?* Most of the self-employed respondents declared that they had started building their own business from scratch. However, the transition of the company into the hands of the next generation is also explicitly emphasised. 17% chose the following response variant: *My business is a family business*. Those who have taken their business over from another business owner constitute less than 10% of the respondents. Their share, however, is not without significance, especially from the point of view of the long-term survival of companies in the market, including family businesses. Firstly, the lack of interest in running a business by close family members does not necessarily lead to business liquidation/closure. The sale of the company to an external buyer can always be an alternative. Secondly, the brand and family traditions, though in a slightly different form, can still be continued by new owners. Thirdly, the so-called. business transfer market proves to be a market with a great potential and in the long term can be an interesting source of income for other business entities.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The smooth functioning of a family business depends to a large extent on the relationship between family members and their involvement in the running of the company. These types of bonds are also an opportunity for the company as they allow a long-term perspective and the adjustment of the company' vision and objectives to the changing market conditions. Thinking about the company as part of the family heritage encourages entrepreneurs to think about the next generation as an investment. A family business, based on shared values, is one of the best forms of education for children. Working in a family business provides young people with the opportunity to pursue professional ambitions. The multi-generational perspective is reflected in the remaining components of family business system. It provides an opportunity, a chance to create a unique family heritage by transferring

the company's values to others, creating talented, dedicated and loyal employees, and passing on the family's assets to the younger generation⁴³. The systemic approach used in family businesses provides an opportunity to develop lasting patterns that create a basis for the repetition of situations and activities⁴⁴. There is a clear feedback loop between the subsystems allowing the transfer of information on the basis of which behaviour and response models as well as adaptation processes are developed.

Running a family business brings with it certain specific risks, different from other companies. Family businesses are the most natural form of entrepreneurship as they arise from the need to ensure a stable and prosperous family life. Their long-term perspective makes these entities the driving force behind the development of every economy. The motivation source of these businesses lies in the family, its values, goals, action motivators, dedication and commitment. All these characteristics combined determine the sustainability and stability of family businesses in the market, and also influence their attractiveness for potential employees. This notion is also confirmed by the results of Flash Eurobarometer presented in the paper. In sociology, the family is the most basic, the oldest and the most commonly encountered social group. Based on common values, aspirations, and relationships, it is the cradle of entrepreneurial attitudes. In economics, family businesses are the engine of deliberate and stable development passed on from a generation to a generation. Trust and loyalty, translating into relationships with employees and customers, are their important attributes. Joint hard work and efforts bring tangible results to all the components of the system. Focus on the family's interests transmits to the whole family business system. Mutual support, integration of activities and competent feedback ensure the development which is favourable for the next generation and each subsystem.

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PRZEDSIĘBIORCZOŚĆ RODZINNA – WYBRANE ASPEKTY EKONOMICZNE I SPOŁECZNE

Na całym świecie przedsiębiorstwa rodzinne to trzon gospodarki. W krajach rozwiniętych biznes rodzinny stanowi najpopularniejszą formę prowadzenia działalności gospodarczej. Jednocześnie, powstawanie i rozwój firm rodzinnych to wyraz funkcjonowania gospodarki wolnorynkowej przejawiający się w indywidualnej przedsiębiorczości i innowacyjności. Na przestrzeni kilku ostatnich dekad znaczenie firm rodzinnych dla rozwoju gospodarki zaczęło wzbudzać coraz większe zainteresowanie. Zasoby literatury na temat różnorodnych form biznesów rodzinnych oraz zróżnicowania w sektorze przedsiębiorczości rodzinnej rosną w bardzo szybkim tempie. Artykuł zmierza do ukazania wzajemnych związków pomiędzy rodziną, postawą przedsiębiorczą a funkcjonowaniem przedsiębiorstw rodzinnych, które w znacznym stopniu odpowiadają za budowanie potencjału gospodarczego i społecznego Unii Europejskiej. Artykuł ma charakter teoretyczno-empiryczny. Omówieniu podlegają wybrane zagadnienia dotyczące przemian zachodzących w rodzinie, jak i jej znaczenia we współczesnym świecie, w tym życiu gospodarczym, oraz specyficzne atrybuty przedsiębiorstw

rodziny. W części empirycznej przedstawione zostają wyniki badania FLASH EUROBAROMETER 354 "Entrepreneurship". W podsumowaniu zostało stwierdzone, że firmy rodzinne są motorem przemysłowego oraz stabilnego rozwoju, który przechodzi z pokolenia na pokolenie. Ważnymi atrybutami są zaufanie i lojalność, przekładające się na relacje z pracownikami, klientami.

Słowa kluczowe: przedsiębiorczość rodzinna, cechy charakterystyczne firm rodzinnych, definicja firmy rodzinnej, przedsiębiorczość w Unii Europejskiej.

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